



## The Southern India Mills' Association

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### NEWS CLIPPINGS –24-05-2018

**Cotton sowing: State still short of target  
by 24 pc**

**Tribune India**

<http://www.tribuneindia.com/news/haryana/cotton-sowing-state-still-short-of-target-by-24-pc/593829.html>

With ideal time for sowing already over by more than a week, Haryana has so far been able to achieve only 76 per cent of its target of cotton sowing. The weekly report of the Agriculture Department for May 22 shows that cotton had been sown on 4.97 lakh hectares against the target of 6.48 lakh.

Agriculture experts recommend that cotton must be sown before May 15 for maximum yield and lower infestation by whitefly and leaf curl virus.

Sources attribute shortage of canal water in the cotton growing districts from the Bhakra canal system and lesser interest in the crop due to lower prices this year as reasons for the phenomenon.

Dr Dilip Monga, Head, Central Institute of Cotton Research (CICR), Sirsa, confirmed that the sowing this time was quite low both in Haryana as well as in Punjab despite their specific recommendations that it should be completed between April 15 and May 15. He said late sowing could lead to infestations by whitefly and leaf curl virus thereby affecting the yield badly.

“In 2015-16, a year after one of the worst attack of whitefly and leaf curl virus on cotton crop in the region, the CICR had conducted trials in Northern India for the impact of these infestations on cotton sown on May 15 versus the crop sown on June 7. We found the infestations were much more in the late sown crop and the yield remained one-third in the crop sown on June 7 as against that sown on May 15,” said Dr Monga.

Gurdeep Singh Mann, a farmer from Kirpal Patti in Sirsa, said that failure of cotton last year and prolonged closure of the Bhakra canal were the major reasons for lower sowing.

“The recommended pre-irrigation for cotton sowing is canal water as it is much superior to any borewell water. Cotton growers kept waiting for canal water and the optimum time for cotton sowing was lost,” Mann said.

Agriculture Minister OP Dhankar said that things were beyond the control of the government as water in the Bhakra reservoir was short and the state was proportionately getting 2,000 to 2,500 cusecs less than normal supply.

“Due to lesser allocation of water these days, the farmers are getting water for one week followed by closure of channels for two weeks, while during heydays, it was two weeks of supplies followed by two weeks of closure,” Dhankar said.

ICE cotton futures fell on Wednesday, after hitting a four-year high in the previous session, ahead of a weekly export sales report due on Thursday.

- \* ICE cotton contract for July expiry CTc1 CTN8 settled down 0.39 cent, or 0.45 percent, at 86.96 cents per lb.
- \* The contract traded within a range of 86.72 and 87.75 cents a lb.
- \* ICE cotton futures settled over 1 percent down on Tuesday after marking a four-year high of 89.88 cents per lb.
- \* "Lack of buyers probably today... and just a bit of a pullback after yesterday's reversal," said Peter Egli, director of risk management at British merchant Plexus Cotton.
- \* "Prices have been following the Chinese market ... we just keep copying what's happening in China. China was up yesterday to a new high and then kind of reversed a little bit ... and we kind of follow a similar pattern."
- \* Over 1.4 million contracts were traded in China's cotton futures CCFc2 CCFc4 on the Zhengzhou Commodity Exchange (ZCE) on Wednesday.
- \* "The reason (for a rise in volume) is that they're afraid, the Xinjiang crop is in trouble because they had some wet and cold weather and they had to do some replantings. Nobody knows exactly how serious the situation is, but the market in China reacted to it," Egli said.
- \* Market participants are keeping a close watch on rain forecasts in Texas.
- \* "Texas has seen some precipitation, but dry land areas are still very dry," said Jack Scoville, vice president with Price Futures Group in Chicago in a note.
- \* ICE cotton contract for December expiry CTZ8 rose 0.25 percent to 84.05 cents.
- \* The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) weekly export sales report are due on Thursday.
- \* U.S. President Donald Trump on Wednesday signaled a new direction in U.S.-China trade talks and said any deal would need "a different structure," fueling uncertainty over current negotiations and sending U.S. stocks lower. Total futures market volume fell by 7,387 to 34,974 lots. Data showed total open interest gained 2,334 to 297,140 contracts in the previous session.
- \* Certificated cotton stocks CERT-COT-STX deliverable as of May 22 totaled 77,225 480-lb bales, unchanged from 77,225 in the previous session.

<b>Maharashtra government to deploy drones to spray insecticide on cotton crop</b>	<b>Indian Express</b> <a href="http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/pune/maharashtra-government-to-deploy-drones-to-spray-insecticide-on-cotton-crop-5187896/">http://indianexpress.com/article/cities/pune/maharashtra-government-to-deploy-drones-to-spray-insecticide-on-cotton-crop-5187896/</a>
<p>The flying machines are used extensively in the United States and other developed countries for spraying chemicals and surveillance of crops.</p> <p>Taking a leaf out of the agricultural practices of developed nations, the state Agriculture Commissionerate, for the first time, is going to use drones to spray insecticide over cotton crop this year. The pilot experiment is being planned in Yavatmal district, said Subhash Nagare, joint director of agriculture, Amravati division.</p> <p>Right now, officials of the Department of Agriculture, as well as the revenue department, were looking for a suitable plot for the project, he said. "The selected field should not have any high-tension electric poles or large trees," said Nagare.</p> <p>As permission from the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) is necessary to fly a drone, the necessary modalities are being worked out.</p> <p>Commissioner of Agriculture, Sachindra Pratap Singh, said the experiment would be closely monitored to check whether it was feasible for other cotton fields. "A large number of permissions are necessary for operating drones and we are working on those," he said. The Commissionerate will also check the economic viability of the project during the pilot experiment.</p> <p>For the pilot project, the department will sign a MoU with a start-up, which had come up with this particular idea.</p> <p>Last year, 18 agricultural labourers had died in Yavatmal after they accidentally inhaled fumes while spraying chemicals on the field. The incident had raised serious concerns, as the labourers reportedly didn't have adequate safety gear, and some activists had even sought a ban on such chemicals.</p> <p>Welcoming the move, Kishore Tiwari, chairman of the state government's committee to combat farm distress, said it would reduce the handling of chemicals by workers. "However, proper care needs to be taken while operating the drones, to avoid spraying over water bodies," he said.</p> <p>The usage of drones in agriculture is not a new concept, but in India, it is still in its nascent stage. The flying machines are used extensively in the United States and other developed countries for spraying chemicals and surveillance of crops.</p>	

<b>Gujarat success in checking pink bollworm catches Maharashtra attention</b>	<b>Financial Express</b> <a href="https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/gujarat-success-in-checking-pink-bollworm-catches-maharashtra-attention/1178966/">https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/gujarat-success-in-checking-pink-bollworm-catches-maharashtra-attention/1178966/</a>
<p>Villages will be advised to go in for one or two varieties of cotton, to go for pickings at the same time, retain cotton only for 140 days so that the pest does not proliferate and also use Phermone traps in case the problem gets serious.</p>	

Gujarat's success in controlling pink bollworm's resistance to Bt cotton has caught the attention of Maharashtra, a major cotton producing state. There is a general consensus among the industry people that if Gujarat could control the pest attack, Maharashtra could take the same route. This season, cotton ginners in Maharashtra have decided to take the lead and go to farmers persuading them to adopt good practices for cotton cultivation.

The Khandesh Gin/Press Factory Owners Association has begun an aggressive campaign in Jalgaon — a major cotton producing belt in the state — with the help of major cotton institutes, including the the South Asia Biotechnology Centre (SABC). Dr CD Mayee, president, SABC visited Jalgaon to tell farmers on how to go about preventing any form of pest attack. More such campaigns will be held across Khandesh region and a 'Cotton Recipe Book' is being published soon for farmers before sowing begins. The book will contain details on what goes into the making of a good healthy crop and farmers will be advised on good practices from the day of the sowing operations on maintaining distance between two saplings to the use of herbicides, fertilisers and duration of the crop itself, Pradeep Jain, president, Khandesh Gin/Press Factory Owners Association said.

The book also provides for helpline for farmers with phone numbers so that they can speak personally with experts on issues related to his crop, he added.

Villages will be advised to go in for one or two varieties of cotton, to go for pickings at the same time, retain cotton only for 140 days so that the pest does not proliferate and also use Phermone traps in case the problem gets serious. Farmers are told to terminate the standing cotton crop before end of February to break the life cycle of the pink bollworm, The recipe books will be distributed through ginning units to farmers.

This is the first time, the association has come out with a book of this nature. For the last couple of years, cotton ginners in Maharashtra had begun an effort in the state to improve productivity of cotton after they discovered that cotton from Gujarat commanded a higher price. What began as an effort to mentor some 40 farmers in 10 talukas of Jalgaon district, resulted in 50-70% improvement in productivity. The yield which was usually 8-10 quintals, rose to more than 15 quintals. With sowing expecting to commence by May 30, the association has repeated the effort this year along with more focus on pink bollworm this season.

"This is an effort to increase awareness among farmers and we have succeeded to some extent," Jain said, adding that the association has brought in in experts and stakeholders including more seed companies and fertiliser firms to advise farmers.

**Farmers worried as heat wave sweeps  
Uttarakhand**

**Times of India**

<https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/dehradun/farmers-worried-as-heat-wave-sweeps-state/articleshow/64294326.cms>

Soaring mercury across the hill state has thrown life out of gear even as meteorologists predicted that the heat wave is likely to continue for some more days. With the temperature touching 42oC on Wednesday, three degrees above normal, farmers in Terai region have raised concern about its detrimental effect on the sowing of kharif crops. Meanwhile, the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) has issued a 'red-coded' warning of heat wave in several

parts of the state for the next three to four days.

Farmers claim that the soaring mercury is delaying the sowing of kharif crops, mainly paddy and cotton, with water shortage and errant electricity supply compounding the woes.

Natthu Lal Bathla, a farmer from Jafarpur village, said, "Kharif crop is sown in almost one lakh hectares of land in Terai region. However, the unusually high temperatures are delaying sowing activities. If this continues, we will face huge losses as water is scarce and electricity supply is also erratic

Jasvinder Singh Mann, another farmer from Sampatpur, said, "The water sources in our village have dried up. This will affect farmers who don't have irrigation facilities."

Talking to TOI, agricultural scientist Anil Hafeez said, "The rising temperatures will be detrimental to the cultivation of paddy and other summer crops. The depleting water level in the region will also affect farming activities."

Irrigation department engineer Vimal Verma said that the biggest reservoir in the district, Nanak Sagar dam, with a capacity of around 60 million cubic metres has run dry even before the sowing season is over. It caters to around 48,500 acres of arable land in both Uttarakhand and Uttar Pradesh.

R K Sinha, meteorologist at GB Pant University in US Nagar district, said, "Mercury has crossed the 42oC mark in Terai for the first time this season on Wednesday. Similar conditions are expected to continue to till the second week of June. Western disturbance in the Himalayan region by mid-June is likely to bring rain and thunderstorm."

**Now, foreign ships can move commodities on local routes**

**Business Line**

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/news/now-foreign-ships-can-move-commodities-on-local-routes/article23971760.ece>

Items must form at least 50% of all cargo

Foreign-flagged ships will be allowed to transport agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and animal husbandry commodities between Indian ports without a licence, the Shipping Ministry said in an order issued on Tuesday in a second round of cabotage relaxation.

On Monday, the Ministry had eased cabotage rules by allowing foreign-flagged container ships to carry export-import (Exim) containers for transshipment and empty containers on local routes without a licence.

Local route access

Only Indian registered ships are allowed to ply on local routes for carrying cargo, according to India's cabotage law. Foreign ships can operate along the coast only when Indian ships are not available, after taking a licence from the Director-General of Shipping, according to the rule that was designed to protect local ship owners. The cabotage relaxation granted to foreign flagged ships for carrying agriculture, horticulture, fisheries and animal husbandry commodities specified in the Indian Trade Classification (ITC), Harmonised System (HS) of the Director-General of Foreign Trade, Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry, is conditional on such commodities contributing to at least

50 per cent of the total cargo on board the ship, PK Sharma, Under Secretary in the Shipping Ministry, said in the May 22 order reviewed by BusinessLine.

## Commodities

These commodities are meat and edible meat offal, fish and crustaceans, molluscs and other aquatic invertebrates, dairy produce, bird's eggs, natural honey, edible products of animal origin (not elsewhere included), vegetables and certain roots and tubers-edible, fruits and nuts- edible, peel of citrus fruits or melons, coffee, tea, mate and spices, cereals, products of the milling industry, malt, starch, inulin, wheat gluten, oil seeds and oleaginous fruits, miscellaneous grains, seeds and fruit, industrial or medicinal plants, straw and fodder, vegetable plaiting materials (not elsewhere specified or included), animal or vegetable fats and oils and their cleavage products, wool prior to yarn formation, cotton, prior to yarn/thread formation, vegetable textile fibres such as flax, hemp and jute.

Water-borne transportation modes, including coastal shipping, being comparatively cheaper modes of transport would enable farmers to access a larger market profitably, widen the range of goods which can be marketed, and lengthen the distances over which domestic trade can be conducted, according to the ministry.

The national perspective plan of Sagarmala programme estimates a potential of more than 9 million tonnes a year for coastal movement of food grains and processed food.

## CENTRE UNVEILS MODEL ACT ON CONTRACT FARMING

Daily Pioneer

<http://www.dailypioneer.com/vivacity/centre-unveils-model-act-on-contract-farming.html>

The law will provide adequate confidence to farmers and incentives to the sponsors to enter into a contract, says Union Agriculture Minister Radha Mohan Singh

The concept of Contract Farming (CF) refers to a system of farming in which bulk purchasers including agro-processing/exporting or trading units enter into a contract with farmer(s) to purchase a specified quantity of any agricultural commodity at a pre-agreed price. Although varied forms of contract farming existed in pockets in the country, the formal contract farming is not, however, widespread in India. By and large, cultivation of commercial crops like cotton, sugarcane, tobacco, tea, coffee, rubber and dairy have had some elements of informal contract farming for a long time.

In order to protect the interests of producers and sponsors of Contract Farming, the Ministry of Agriculture FW drafted Model APMC Act, 2003, which provided provisions for registration of sponsors, recording of agreement and dispute settlement mechanism.

Due to conflict of interest of contract farming sponsors with the APMCs, which were the designated registering, agreement recording and dispute settlement authority the atmosphere was not facilitative. It did not provide adequate confidence to the farmers and incentive to the sponsors to enter into a contract. Thus, the formal contract of farming could not pick up at the ground level as expected. In some states like Maharashtra, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, limited formal contract farming has been in practice. This warranted for developmental, holistic and progressive law on contract farming. Further, though there exists Indian Contract Act, 1872, it is felt not very

conducive for agriculture. It considers the two parties to the agreement as equals, while farmers are weaker vis-à-vis the sponsor-company.

In the above context and with a view to integrate farmers with bulk purchasers including exporters, agro- industries et al for better price realisation through mitigation of market and price risks to the farmers and ensuring smooth agro raw material supply to the agro industries, Union Finance Minister in the budget for 2017-18 announced to prepare a Model Contract Farming Act and circulate the same to the States for its adoption. In pursuance, the Union Agricultural Minister constituted a Committee under the Chairmanship of Dr Ashok Dalwai, CEO, NRAA in February, 2017 to draft a holistic, facilitative and promotional Model Contract Farming Act. Its secretary (marketing), advisor, NITI Aayog, and principal secretaries, in-charge of agricultural marketing of Maharashtra, Karnataka, Odisha, Punjab and Madhya Pradesh are amongst the members.

The committee held five meetings; and held wider consultations with experts, academics, professionals, contract farming companies/firms, trade associations and food value chain operators apart from undertaking field visits.

The final Model Act The State/UT Agricultural Produce and Livestock Contract Farming and Services (Promotion and Facilitation) Act, 2018 has been approved by the Competent Authority and was released on May 22 at Vigyan Bhawan by Radha Mohan Singh, Union Agriculture Minister.

The details of the act were presented by Dr Ashok Dalwai, CEO, National Rainfed Area Authority. This was followed by open house discussion. There was unanimity among the States to adopt the Model Contract Farming and Services Act so as to ensure assured market at pre-agreed prices.

<b>Apparel institutes invited to take part in Atal New India Challenge</b>	<b>Times of India</b> <a href="https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/coimbatore/apparel-institutes-invited-to-take-part-in-atal-new-india-challenge/articleshow/64295766.cms">https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/coimbatore/apparel-institutes-invited-to-take-part-in-atal-new-india-challenge/articleshow/64295766.cms</a>
<p>AIC-NIFT TEA Incubation Centre for Textiles and Apparels is inviting textile colleges to submit ideas and concepts, which suits areas mentioned in Atal New India Challenge.</p> <p>The winners could get an incubation grant up to Rs 1 crore to develop their products and commercialise them. The applications should be submitted before Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) and the last date to apply is June 10.</p> <p>NITI Aayog, the Central government organisation, had recently announced that the people from MSMEs, start ups, research and development sectors and academicians could submit ideas and concepts in 17 areas including waste management recycling and reuse. Five Union ministries including agriculture, railways, road transport, drinking water and sanitation, and housing and urban affairs are on board for the contest.</p> <p>“Anyone, who has market-ready products, which could have positive impact on environment, economy and society could present their ideas. The objectives of the contest are to generate employment and contribute to economic growth,” said chief executive officer of AIC-NIFTTEA centre R Periyasamy.</p> <p>“The innovative concepts in production management, smart factory, waste management and packaging management could suit the bill in the textile and apparel industry. Being the incubation centre for textiles and</p>	

apparels, we have planned to invite potential incubatees from the textile and fashion institutions to present their innovative ideas for the contest," he said. The selected incubatees will be sent to respective incubation centres. AIC-NIFTTEA centre will train the incubatees, who have proved their mettle, in apparel sector.

"Despite the development achieved so far in Tirupur knitwear cluster, the concept of product development did not evolve properly on par with the international scientific standards. Contests like this could help to improve in the required areas with the help of innovative ideas generated within and outside of the industry. The incubatees selected will get the infrastructure, technical support from experts and grant to develop their products," he added

<b>India takes US steel tariffs complaint to World Trade Organization</b>	<b>Business Standard</b> <a href="http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-takes-us-steel-tariffs-complaint-to-world-trade-organization-11805240033_1.html">http://www.business-standard.com/article/economy-policy/india-takes-us-steel-tariffs-complaint-to-world-trade-organization-11805240033_1.html</a>
<p>India has launched a complaint against the US to challenge US President Donald Trump's tariffs on steel and aluminium, a filing published by the World Trade Organization showed on Wednesday.</p> <p>Indian officials told Reuters last month that their government would open a WTO dispute if the country's firms were not granted an exemption.</p> <p>Trump imposed the tariffs in March, levying 25 per cent on steel imports and 10 percent on aluminium. He said they were justified by national security concerns and therefore outside the WTO's remit.</p> <p>India, China, Russia, Japan, Turkey and the European Union have all dismissed that claim, regarding the US tariffs as "safeguards" under the WTO rules, entitling them to a combined \$3.5 billion in annual compensation. India's retaliation claim seeks to recoup a cost of \$31 million levied on its aluminium exports and \$134 million on steel, and it has said it could target US exports of soya oil, palmolein and cashew nuts in its retaliation. Its latest legal challenge seeks to force the United States to scrap the tariffs entirely. It follows a similar move last month by China, which Washington called "completely baseless"</p>	

<b>Government to step up coal supply to power plants from May 19 -June 30</b>	<b>Financial Express</b> <a href="https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/government-to-step-up-coal-supply-to-power-plants-from-may-19-june-30/1175653/">https://www.financialexpress.com/industry/government-to-step-up-coal-supply-to-power-plants-from-may-19-june-30/1175653/</a>
<p>Government has decided to augment coal supplies to centre/ state power plants and independent power producers (IPPs) from May 19 to June 30 to overcome shortage of the dry fuel and check power crisis.</p> <p>Government has decided to augment coal supplies to centre/ state power plants and independent power producers (IPPs) from May 19 to June 30 to overcome shortage of the dry fuel and check power crisis. The decision was taken in a joint meeting of power, coal and railways ministries on May 17, 2018. However, experts think the move may affect captive power generators in sectors like steel and cement. Ministry of railways has asked all its zones to accord high priority to power plants from May 19-June 30.</p>	



“It has been decided that loading of coal for power houses (plants of central/state utilities and IPPs) from goods sheds should be accorded high priority till June 30, 2018. These instructions will be applicable on the rake supplies made in goods sheds from May 19, 2018 onwards,” it said in a letter to the zones.

The move comes in the wake of power ministry’s request for granting high priority in loading of coal for power houses from goods sheds so as to facilitate higher supplies of coal to power sector, it added. Similar directive was given to South East Central Railways by Coal India arm Mahanadi Coalfields. Indian Captive Power Producers Association Secretary Rajiv Agarwal however termed the decision “bad” and said in the last four years the share of industrial power consumption has reduced from 45 per cent to 40 per cent. “In the last one year, the captive power producers have been suffering. They are getting 10 to 30 per cent of their coal requirement. We see it as clear discrimination between small and large power plants.

It will affect all major sectors including cement, steel, textile, chemicals and aluminium,” he told PTI. According to the data compiled by the Central Electricity Authority on May 17, as many as 24 non-pit heads plants were facing coal shortage out of monitored 114 plants. Among the 24 plants, 18 coal stocks for less than 4 days and classified as super critical while other 6 have coal stocks for less than a week and categorised as critical ones.

Some experts think this may increase coal imports in the country by captive power plants and others. The shortage of coal has resulted in surge in spot prices to as high as Rs 10.80 per unit in September last year. The government in October last said the issue of coal supply to power plants is being addressed in a co-coordinated manner by the ministries of power, coal and railways.